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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

27366

7590

03/08/2010

WESTMAN CHAMPLIN (MICROSOFT CORPORATION)
SUITE 1400
900 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

EXAMINER

SHAH, PARAS D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2626

DATE MAILED: 03/08/2010

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/780,177	02/16/2004	Jian Wu	306538.01	1736

TITLE OF INVENTION: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONSTRUCTING A SPEECH FILTER USING ESTIMATES OF CLEAN SPEECH AND NOISE

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	06/08/2010

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. **PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.** THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN **THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE** OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. **THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.** SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
 or Fax **(571)-273-2885**

INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

27366 7590 03/08/2010

WESTMAN CHAMPLIN (MICROSOFT CORPORATION)
SUITE 1400
900 SECOND AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)
(Signature)
(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10780.177 02/16/2004 Jian Wu 306538.01 1736

TITLE OF INVENTION: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONSTRUCTING A SPEECH FILTER USING ESTIMATES OF CLEAN SPEECH AND NOISE

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1510	\$300	\$0	\$1810	06/08/2010

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
SHAH, PARAS D	2626	704-233000

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- ☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a **Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, 1
 (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. 2
 3

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE

(B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): ☐ Individual ☐ Corporation or other private group entity ☐ Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- ☐ Issue Fee
☐ Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
☐ Advance Order - # of Copies _____

4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- ☐ A check is enclosed.
☐ Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
☐ The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. Change in Entity Status (from status indicated above)

- ☐ a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. ☐ b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____
 Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 1020 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 1020 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability**Application No.**

10/780,177

Examiner

PARAS SHAH

Applicant(s)

WU ET AL.

Art Unit

2626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 01/28/2010.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,6,9 and 10.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

/P. S./
Examiner, Art Unit 2626

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to the Amendments and Arguments filed on 01/28/2010. Claims 1, 6, 9, 10 remain pending and have been examined, with claims 13-23 being cancelled. The Applicants' amendment and remarks have been carefully considered and the Application is in condition for allowance
2. All previous objections and rejections directed to the Applicant's disclosure and claims not discussed in this Office Action have been withdrawn by the Examiner.

Reasons for Allowance

3. Claims 1, 6, 9, and 10 are allowed.
4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art of record Acero discloses a method of identifying a clean speech signal from a noisy speech signal, the method comprising: receiving an observation vector representing a segment of a noisy speech signal (page 849-850, section 2, a speech signal with uncorrelated additive noise); estimating a clean speech value and a noise value based on the observation vector (page 850, section 4, an ML estimator is used to determine the noise vectors, then an MMSE estimator is used to estimate the uncorrupted (clean speech)vector) wherein estimating a clean speech value and a noise value comprises using parameters that describe a distribution of noise values (page 850, section 4.2, *ML estimation of noise*) comprising determining the parameters of the distribution of noise values (page 850, section 4.2, *ML estimation of noise*). However, Acero does not specifically disclose the use of the prior clean speech

model to determine the mean and covariance for a distribution of noise vales, smoothing of the clean speech and noise values over time and frequency, where the smoothing for clean speech is across different frames and the utilization of these smooth values in the setting of the gain.

Pastor does disclose a numerator of a filter gain ratio as a function of the clean speech value and the noise value (see col. 3, lines 15-24, especially equation of Wiener Filter) (e.g. Manipulation of the equation by substituting $(y_s + y_x)$ for y_u and making a common denominator yields the numerator being a function of noise and speech); setting a denominator of the filter gain ratio as the sum of the clean speech value and the noise value (see col. 3, lines 15-24, especially equation of Wiener Filter, Manipulation of the equation by substituting $(y_s + y_x)$ for y_u in the denominator yields the sum as claimed (see col. 6, lines 20, equation 6, where the equivalence is shown) (e.g. It is inherent from the equation in Pastor that a simple substitution for the power spectral density of the noisy signal with the summing of the speech and noise spectral density is equivalent and using this substitution for establishing a common denominator. The result yields the sum of the speech and noise in the denominator and the numerator being a function of speech and noise. The clean speech estimate is simply the subtraction of the noisy speech signal by the estimate of the noise.); using the filter gain ratio in a filter that is applied to the noisy speech signal (see Figure 1, step 5, where the signal is reconstructed from the wiener filtering and see col. 4, lines 59-col. 5, lines 3). However, Pastor does not specifically disclose the use of the prior clean speech model to determine the mean and covariance for a distribution of noise vales,

smoothing of the clean speech and noise values over time and frequency, where the smoothing for clean speech is across different frames and the utilization of these smooth values in the setting of the gain.

The newly cited reference of Xu (US 7428490) is cited to disclose smoothing of signal power spectrum over time and frequency. However, Xu does not specifically disclose the use of the prior clean speech model to determine the mean and covariance for a distribution of noise vales, smoothing of each of the clean speech and noise values over time and frequency, where the smoothing for clean speech is across different frames and the utilization of these smooth values in the setting of the gain.

The newly cited reference of Deng et al. is cited to disclose a MMSE estimator for estimating clean speech, which relies on the noise estimate (see page 1914, right column, equation 12. The clean speech estimate is also dependent upon the prior model for clean speech (see page 1814, left column, equation 6, $p(x)$). The noise estimate is estimated using the mean, covariance and observation vector. However, Deng et al. does not specifically disclose the use of the prior clean speech model to determine the mean and covariance for a distribution of noise vales, smoothing of each of the clean speech and noise values over time and frequency, where the smoothing for clean speech is across different frames and the utilization of these smooth values in the setting of the gain.

Hence, none of the cited prior art either alone or in combination thereof teach the sequence of limitations as recited in independent claim 1. Specifically, the use of the prior clean speech model to determine the mean and covariance for a distribution of

noise vales, smoothing of the clean speech and noise values over time and frequency, where the smoothing for clean speech is across different frames and the utilization of these smooth values in the setting of the gain as recited in the last paragraph of claim 1.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Wu (US 7,428,490) is cited to disclose smoothing of estimates for speech enhancement.

Deng et al. ("Log-domain speech feature enhancement using sequential map noise estimation and a phase-sensitive model of the acoustic environment) is cited to disclose MMSe speech feature enhancement.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PARAS SHAH whose telephone number is (571)270-1650. The examiner can normally be reached on MON.-THURS. 7:30a.m.-4:00p.m. EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Hudspeth can be reached on (571)272-7843. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/David R Hudspeth/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2626

/P. S./
Examiner, Art Unit 2626

02/03/2010